



Caring for Aging Loved Ones

*Tips For Hiring An In-Home
Non-Medical Caregiver*



As our loved ones grow older, assistance with daily living often becomes necessary.

There are many services available to allow your loved ones to stay in their homes and remain independent.

Home services vary from skilled nursing care to general household help. The focus of this guide is for hiring in-home non-medical caregivers who assist with activities of daily living.

This information is not intended to be comprehensive; there are many factors that should be considered, depending on circumstances. The purpose of this publication is to provide a starting point when deciding to obtain the services of an in-home non-medical caregiver.

Methods of hiring a caregiver:

Friends or family members can be an enormous help during a time when loved ones need extra care and attention. Keep in mind, however, that the responsibility of caring for another can require a great deal of time, skill, and patience. Here are some questions to ask:

- Does the friend or family member have the ability, desire, and time to provide adequate care for the person who needs this care?
- Does the friend or family member have reliable transportation to provide this care?
- Does the friend or family member have a history of money problems or alcohol/drug abuse?

Hiring a caregiver yourself may seem less costly than using an agency; however, there is also added liability and responsibility. Here are some items to consider:

- Employee taxes and worker's compensation: as the employer you will be responsible to verify the legal status of the worker, pay taxes, and keep adequate records.
- Caregiver references: do you know how to verify them?
- Drug/alcohol tests: do you know how to obtain them?
- Background checks: do you know how to conduct a thorough background check?
- Do you know what certification and training is available for the level of care needed?

Supervision of the in-home caregiver:

- Who will handle supervising the caregiver?
- Who will monitor the caregiver's performance?
- If the person you hire fails to show up or does not work out for any reason; is there a back-up person or alternative plan?
- To whom do you report problems?

Using a caregiving agency to provide the services you need can be beneficial as the agency can provide a variety of caregiving services.

The agency will take care of taxes, worker's compensation, etc., and will find a replacement if a new worker is needed. The agency may assume liability for some issues that arise during the course of care.

Service agreements and costs with agencies:

- Written contract – what kind? Sample?
- Method of payment – who is responsible for billing?
- If using ALTCs or VA benefits, does contract meet requirements – what requirements?

Here are some other issues to consider:

- How long has the agency been in business and can it provide references?
- How do you find out if they are bonded and insured?
- Will you always see the same caregiver each time?
- Does a supervisor make regular visits to the home?
- What initial and continuing education is required of the caregivers?
- What type of assessment is done to determine the level of care needed? How do you know what is good; what is the cost?
- Is the caregiver trained to provide the level of care your loved-one needs?
- Are background checks performed and results obtained before caregivers provide services? What type of screening is done?
- Is there 24 hour emergency coverage?
- Will you be able to hire weekend or evening help?
- Is there a backup plan if the caregiver does not arrive on time?
- Who do you call with complaints and how are complaints resolved?
- Are all agreements and costs in writing? A written contract should specify the tasks to be performed and the costs for these services?

Warning signs of Caregiver problems:

- Does the caregiver prevent family or friends from visiting?
- Do they set rigid times for visits? (This indicates they are isolating the senior)
- Does the caregiver do all the talking when you visit?
- Is the caregiver making most of the decisions for your loved one?
- Is the caregiver inviting their own friends/family into your loved one's home or letting others use their car and other possessions?
- Has your loved one's personality changed since the caregiver was hired?
- Indicators or signs of physical and mental abuse
- Has the home environment changed?
- Are there missing credit cards, checks, valuables, or cash?

Some do's and don'ts to keep in mind

- Don't allow your loved one to add the caregiver to their will, trust, or bank accounts.
- Don't ask the caregiver to pay bills or manage finances.
- Don't allow the caregiver access to checking accounts, credit cards, debit cards, etc.
- Don't lend the caregiver money or personal possessions. Do adequately supervise the caregiver by making unannounced visits.
- Do check on the welfare of your loved one, monitor financial records such as monthly bank statements/investment accounts.
- Do scan of home during visits for missing personal belongings
- Don't give valuable gifts to the caregiver

Valuable Resources

Adult Protective Services - 1-877-SOS-ADULT

Call to report abuse or exploitation.

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)

www.ahcccs.state.az.us Information about Arizona Long Term Care system, part of AHCCCS, can be obtained by calling 602-417-7000 (or 1-800-962-6690 toll free within Arizona).

Arizona Area Agencies on Aging by Region

www.azaging.org AZ4A is a consortium of the eight Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) located throughout the state of Arizona, including rural, urban, and tribal communities. Arizona's AAA's are dedicated to providing services to older adults and their caregivers, adults with disabilities and long-term care needs, and boomers. AAA's advocate, plan, coordinate, develop and deliver home and community-based services. The goal of this aging services network is to enable older adults to "age in place," that is, to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

24-Hour Senior HELP LINE

602-264-HELP (4357) The 24-hour Senior HELP LINE is operated by the Area Agency on Aging, Region One in Maricopa County. Toll-free number: 888-783-7500.

Administration on Aging (AOA)

www.aoa.gov, AOA has an eldercare locator service accessible by calling 1-800-677-1116.

The regional office is:

Region IX, 90 7th Street, t-8100

San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: 415-437-8780

Fax: 415-437-8782

Arizona Attorney General

1275 W. Washington Street

Phoenix, AZ 85007

Phone: 602-542-2123

www.azag.gov

The Attorney General's office offers life care planning packets, consumer resources and fraud prevention tips.

Arizona Department of Economic Security

State Health Insurance

Assistance(SHIP)

1-800-432-4040

Arizona Non-Medical Homecare Association

P.O. Box 8042, Tempe, AZ 85281

Phone: 602-283-3503

www.aznha.org

This organization promotes standards for non-medical home care providers.

Better Business Bureau of Central, Northern & Western Arizona

4428 N. 12th Street

Phoenix, AZ 85014

Phone: 602-264-1721

www.arizonabbb.org

BBB can assist in providing company reliability information and general advice.

Eldercare Locator

Call 800-677-1116 for the national hotline, administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human services that provides information on local resources for seniors.

Medicare

www.medicare.gov

1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227)

tty 1-877-486-2048

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

3275 W. Ina Rd, #130

Tucson, AZ 85741

Phone: 520-881-8008

www.caremanager.org

This organization can provide referrals to members of its organization.

National Clearinghouse for Long Term Care Information

www.longtermcare.gov

A free planning kit called, "Own Your Future" can be downloaded for free online.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

www.va.gov

Phone: 1-800-827-1000



Some Helpful Information

If you are considering hiring a caregiver for a senior family member or friend, consider checking publicly available databases that may contain information about the individual you may hire. It would be wise to check the following sources for information about anyone under consideration for employment as a caregiver for seniors. Then, depending on the individual's background or training (such as whether the person has a background as a licensed nurse), you may want to check the licensing database that contains information about individuals in a specific field or occupation.

Even if a person is not listed on any of these databases, that does not guarantee the individual is honest and law abiding. However, this is publicly available information which employers of caregivers for seniors should know exists and utilize as needed.

Depending upon who you are considering hiring, you may also want to check one or more websites that list specific professions or facility types. We have listed some of those sites on www.azag.gov website under "seniors".

For the most accurate, up-to-date information, it is highly suggested to call the applicable agency directly as it is plausible for information to change daily. Please also note that the length each directory is maintained varies from agency to agency.

General Arizona Information

Elder abuse directories & licensing websites that may contain information about prospective employees

Adult Protective Services Elder Abuse Registry (via written request)

Information about individuals when allegations have been substantiated against the perpetrator in relation to abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

www.azdes.gov/forms

602-542-4446

AZ Judicial Branch, Lower Courts

Information about domestic, civil, and criminal case information within the Superior, Municipal, Justice, and Magistrate courts for all counties.

<http://www.azcourts.gov/> - select: "public services" and "case search"

602-452-3300

AZ Judicial Branch, Supreme Court

Information about domestic, civil, and criminal case opinions within the Supreme court for all counties.

<http://www.azcourts.gov/> - select: "AZ supreme court" and "opinions"

602-452-3300

Department of Public Safety Sex Offender Information

Information about individuals when allegations have been substantiated against the perpetrator in relation to sex crimes.

<http://az.gov/app/sows/home.xhtml>

(602) 255-0611

Arizona Attorney General Elder Abuse Registry

(via written request)

Information about individuals involved in civil lawsuits filed in the State of Arizona.

<http://www.azag.gov>

1275 W. Washington Street. Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 542-5763 or outside of the Phoenix metro area (800) 352-8431

Office of Inspector General U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services

Information about individuals who are excluded from working for federally funded healthcare programs.

<http://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/>

Planning Notes

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IN COLLABORATION WITH:



The Attorney General's Office



Better Business Bureau



"I Will" Prevent Elder Abuse



Assistance. Advocacy. Answers on Aging.

Area Agencies On Aging



Maricopa Elder Abuse Prevention Alliance
MEAPA®

And Special Thanks To Pima Council On Aging

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